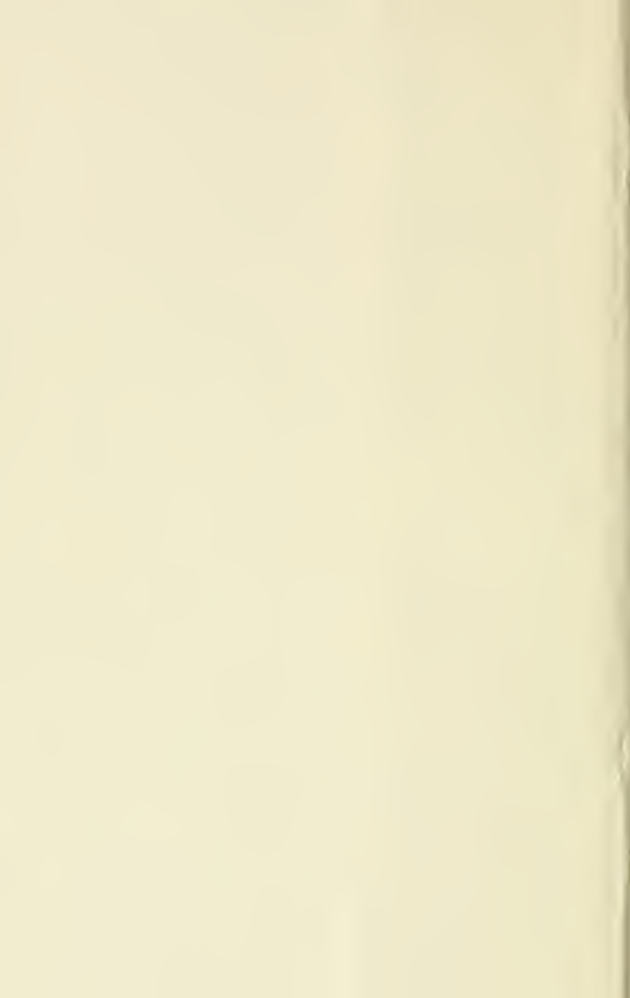




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SELECT TRANSLATIONS

FROM

THE GREEK

OF

QUINTUS SMYRNÆUS.

BY

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P R E F A C E.

OF Quintus Smyrnæus, or, as he is more commonly called, Quintus Calaber, nothing is known. The former surname he has received, because Tzetzes ^a applies it to him, and because he himself, in his twelfth book, says, that the Muses inspired him, while he was feeding sheep near Smyrna: the latter, from his poem having been discovered by Cardinal Bessarion in a monastery of Calabria.

His “Supplement to the Iliad” consists of fourteen books, of which no translation has

^a Chiliad ii. 489.

appeared in our language: it is generally supposed that he borrowed largely from the Cyclic poets, chiefly from Lesches^b.

Verbosity being the prevailing fault of Quintus, I have shortened, in the following translations^c, several of the speeches and descriptions: I have also taken the liberty to leave out one or two similies, without marking the omission by asterisks.

I have made use of blank verse in preference to rhyme, thinking it impossible for the latter to convey to an English reader the most distant idea of the simple tone of Grecian

^b Heyne's Excurs. I. (de Rerum Trojanarum Auctoribus) ad Æn. II.

^c The text of Quintus is so corrupt, that, in order to draw a meaning from some passages, I have been obliged to adopt the conjectural readings of Pauw.

poetry : I expect, therefore, to be told by the admirers of Pope's Homer that my lines are intolerably prosaic.

A. D.

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1

THE
VALOUR AND DEATH
OF
PENTHESILEA.

From Book I.

A princesse of great powre and greater pride,
And Queene of Amazons, in armes well tride
And sundry battels, which she hath atchieved
With great successe, that her hath glorifide,
And made her famous, more than is believed.

Facry Quene, b. v. c. 4. s. 33.

THE
VALOUR AND DEATH
OF
PENTHESILEA.

WHEN godlike Hector, by Achilles slain,
Had fed the pyre, and stor'd within the urn
His bones were buried ; from their gates no more
The Trojans issu'd, the surpassing might
Of fell Æacides afraid to meet.
As when herds grazing in the vale have seen
A shaggy lion, from his glaring eyes
Quick to the neighb'ring groves they scud, and there
Trembling remain ; thro' fear of Peleus' son
So in their city lurk'd the bands of Troy :
For they were mindful how his arm had quell'd

Unnumber'd heroes, where Scamander's stream
 Rolls eddying to the sea ; how many a youth
 He fiercely slew beside their native walls,
 And how by him the godlike Hector bled,
 The light of Ilion, and his country's hope :
 How, too, in islands of the restless deep
 He slaughter'd many chiefs, while o'er the brine
 He sought the realms of Priam. In their towers,
 Of these things not forgetful, did they sit
 Trembling, and grief within each bosom rose,
 As if already blaz'd with bickering flames
 Devoted Troy.

Now from Thermodon's flood,
 That widely-flowing laves the Scythian plain,
 Cloth'd in the beauty of Immortals came
 Penthesilea ; eager for the din
 Of war, and wishful the reproach to shun
 Of all her kindred for a grievous deed,

Tho' undesign'd, that caus'd her ceaseless woe ;
 Since she, while aiming at the mountain-stag,
 Had slain Hyppolita, her sister dear :
 Therefore she came to Troy's illustrious land.
 And now she long'd in the thick ranks of war
 Her crime to expiate, and with her sword
 To offer victims to the Furies dire,
 Who, tho' unseen, pursu'd her, to avenge
 Her sister's blood ; for with unwearied speed
 They chase the guilty, tracking all their steps.
 Her to the war twelve maidens follow'd, each
 Radiant in beauty, and of martial mien ;
 Content to serve her, tho' themselves renown'd.
 As the bright Moon amid the lesser fires
 Shines with unrivall'd splendour, when dark clouds,
 Breaking, disperse themselves, nor blot the sky,
 So shone the Queen 'mid her attendant train ;
 'Mid Clonie, Evandra, Polemusa,

Derione, Antandra, the divine
 Bremusa, and Harmothoe with eyes
 Of jetty lustre, and Hippothoe,
 Antibrote, Alcibie, Derimachia,
 And Thermodossa glorying in her spear.
 Or, as Aurora from th' Olympian heights
 Descends, rejoicing in her beamy steeds,
 And moves amid the golden-tressed Hours
 Conspicuous ; so came the warrior-maid,
 Peerless amid her Amazons, to Troy.
 Th' admiring Trojans throng'd around to view
 The well-greav'd daughter of the god of war,
 Like one of the celestials ; in her face
 Was terrible beauty ; lovely was her smile ;
 And from beneath her arched brows stream'd keen
 The lightning of her eyes ; while virgin shame
 Deepen'd the soft carnation of her cheek.
 As, when the fields have thirsted long for rain,

From some high hill if husbandmen behold
 The streaky ; Iris spanning the blue wave,
 And heaven obscur'd by gathering clouds, their hearts
 Are gladden'd by the sign of winds and showers ;
 So joy'd the sons of Ilion, when they saw
 Within their walls the Amazonian Queen
 Eager for war ; and hope again reviv'd
 Their drooping hearts. E'en Priam, when he view'd
 The maiden, felt a respite from his woe ;
 As, when a man, whom blindness has oppress'd,
 And who has long'd to see the light, or die,
 Once more, by mortal skill, or heavenly aid,
 Beholds the dawn of the purpureal day,
 Tho' weak his power of vision, and tho' still
 Disease be lurking in his orbs, he feels
 Alleviation of calamity ;
 So hoary Priam half forgot his grief,
 Tho' sorrow for his sons untimely slain

Consumes his heart.

Straight to the palace then

Kindly he led the maid, as if she had been
 A daughter of his love, from some far land,
 After long absence, to his fond embrace
 Returning. Splendid was the costly feast,
 Such as great monarchs, having crush'd their foes,
 And proud in victory, are wont to spread.
 Many and beauteous gifts did Priam give
 To the brave Amazon, and said that he
 Would many other precious gifts bestow,
 If she afflicted Troy should succour. Deeds,
 Surpassing mortal strength, the maiden promis'd ;
 To slay Achilles, with her spear destroy
 The bands of Greece, and burn their well-beak'd ships,
 Infatuate ! nor knew she how the son
 Of Peleus rag'd resistless in the fight.
 Her when the daughter of Eetion heard

So proudly vaunting, to herself she said ;

“ Ah wretch ! what fatal impulse fires thy mind

“ To boast thus foolishly ? No match art thou

“ For fell Achilles, who will soon exult

“ O'er thy pale corse with gory dust defil'd.

“ Hector was far superior in the ranks

“ Of war to thee, and in his native Troy

“ Was deem'd a God, and yet by Peleus' son

“ My hero bled : he was the pride of me,

“ And of his hoary parents ;—would that earth

“ Had held me cold and senseless, ere the spear

“ Had pierc'd my Hector's throat ! ere I had seen,

“ Dragg'd by the victor's steeds round Ilion's walls,

“ The husband of my youth !” Thus to herself

Spoke fair Andromache, as sad she thought

On Hector, for chaste matrons long lament

Their perish'd lords.

Now sunk the rolling sun

In ocean's stream profound, and silent night
 Came on. In Priam's hall the feast was o'er,
 And careful damsels for the warrior queen
 Prepar'd the couch. She to her chamber sped,
 And gentle Sleep soon weigh'd her eye-lids down,
 When, by Minerva sent, a fraudulent Dream
 Rush'd from the skies, the bane of her and Troy ;
 Her father's awful form the Vision wore,
 And much it urg'd her boldly to contend
 With fleet Achilles: as it spoke, her heart
 Bounded with joy, and confidence arose
 Within her breast, that she some wond'rous deed
 Of valour should perform. Too easy maid,
 Thus credence giving to the shadowy dreams
 Of night, that babble mockeries, and still
 Delude the race of much-enduring men !

But when Aurora, rosy-ankl'd, smil'd,

Penthesilea left her couch, and cloth'd
Her limbs in armour sheen, the gift of Mars ;
First to her snowy legs she fitted close
The golden greaves, and on her tender breast
Bound the strong plate of variegated mail.
Then from her shoulder the huge sword she slung
Proudly, its sheath all exquisitely wrought
With ivory and silver. Next she took
Her crescent buckler, like the horned Moon,
When, gleaming o'er the waves, she climbs the sky
With half-replenish'd lamp. Her helmet last,
Its nodding crest bedropt with gold, she plac'd
Upon her head. In this array, she shone,
Refulgent, as the forky fires that Jove
Hurls to earth, the red vaunt-couriers
Of the big rain-drops, or the roaring winds.
In her left hand, behind her shield, she bore
Two jav'lins snatcht in haste, and in her right,

An axe with double edge, which Discord gave,
 To be the maiden's great defence in war.
 In this exulting, Ilion's sacred towers
 She left, exciting to the glorious fray
 The Trojan chiefs, who follow'd her, erewhile
 Afraid to face Achilles. On her steed
 Graceful she sat, a courser fleet of foot
 And beautiful, which to the dauntless maid
 The wife of Boreas Orithyia gave,
 Before she sought the Thracian plains. Thus fate
 Impell'd the beauteous Amazon to lead
 The sons of Troy to battle, few of whom
 Were destined to behold their homes again :
 As the large flock moves on behind the ram,
 Which the wise shepherd in the front hath plac'd,
 So Troy's best warriors, and the manly maids
 Follow'd Penthesilea ; while she seem'd
 Like virgin Pallas, when she rush'd against

Earth's giant brood, or like the tow'ring form
Of Discord, raging mid the walks of war.

Meanwhile the son of rich Laomedon
Turn'd to the temple of Idæan Jove,
Who still with favouring eye regardeth Troy,
And thus with lifted hands pour'd forth his prayer :
“ Hear, Sire supreme ! O in this happy day,
“ Beneath the valour of the warrior-queen,
“ Let many a Grecian bite the dust ! but her
“ Back to my palace guide in safety ; this
“ Grant for the sake of Mars, thy mighty son,
“ And for the maiden's sake ; for she is fair
“ As are th' Immortals, from whose race she springs.
“ Heap not more sorrows on my head, for I
“ Have many ; fate hath snatcht my sons away,
“ While fighting foremost in the battle's heat ;
“ Of the high race of Dardanus but few

“ Survive, and Ilion totters to its fall—

“ O grant some respite from the woes of war !”

Scarce had he said, when on the left appear'd

An eagle ; in his talons did he clutch

A dying dove, and with shrill cry he pass'd

The startl'd monarch, who too truly deem'd

That he should never welcome from the fight

Penthesilea, clad in Argive spoils.

When from afar the Grecian host beheld

The sons of Troy advancing to the war

All proudly, as a band of mountain pards

Rush on the timid flock ; and when they saw

Clad in refulgent arms the warrior-maid

Scouring the plain, like some consuming fire,

That rages mid the forest's crackling boughs,

Its fury heighten'd by the fanning winds,

They thus exclaim'd ; “ Who now (since Hector sleeps

“ Among the dead) hath gathered Ilion’s sons,
 “ And thus excites them to the martial strife,
 “ Moving amid them like a deity?
 “ Come then ! let us too in our hearts conceive
 “ Heroic confidence, for we to-day
 “ Not unregarded by the Gods shall meet
 “ ‘The strength of Troy.’” They said, and from the ships
 Rush’d on the foe. The armies met, and clos’d
 In fatal strife ; loud was the clang of arms ;
 Spear against spear was shiver’d ; helm with helm,
 And buckler clash’d with buckler, while the plain
 Of Troy was purpl’d with their smoking blood.
 Now sunk beneath Penthesilea’s might
 Molon, Persinoos, and Lernos brave :
 With her keen lance Derione transfix’d
 Laogonus ; and virgin Clonie slew
 Menippus, who had follow’d to the war
 Protesilaus, when he left the walls

Of Phylace to find an early death.

But when Podarces saw Menippus fall,
His lov'd companion, furiously he ran
At Clonie, and forceful drove his spear
Right thro' her body, and the bowels gush'd,
Mingl'd with streaming crimson, from the wound.
Penthesilea, madd'ning at the sight,
Rais'd her long lance, and at Podarces made
A thrust ; the swelling muscles of his hand
The weapon pierc'd, and op'd the spouting veins ;
Groaning he fled the fight, and from the throng
Retiring, in his comrades' arms expir'd.
Idomeneus with deadly spear now gor'd
Bremusa's snowy bosom, and she fell
At once to earth with a loud shriek, as falls
By woodman's stroke upon the echoing hills
The lofty ash ; her lovely limbs grew cold,
And her soul mounted on the breeze. Then died,

Slain by the spear of great Meriones,
 Evandra, and his griding sword laid low
 Fair Thermodossa. Struck by Ajax, fell
 Derione: and next an equal fate
 Derimachia and Aleibia share,
 For Diomed with glancing falchion smites
 Their slender necks, and their plum'd heads are roll'd
 In the dust apart, and backwards, heaving, sink
 Their mutilated trunks: two heifers thus
 Drop at the altar, when the glitt'ring axe
 Descending strikes them panting to the ground.
 Now Sthenelus the brave Cabirus slew,
 Who came from Sestos in defence of Troy,
 Destin'd, alas! no more to see his home.
 Paris beheld his fall, and wrathful hurl'd
 A dart at Sthenelus, which miss'd its aim,
 And following the direction of the fates
 Pierc'd young Evenor of the brazen helm,

Who left Dulichium in the cause of Greece.

* * * * *

But Polypætes now Dresæus slew,
 Whom to Thiodamas Neæra bore
 By snowy Sipylus ; where once the Gods
 Chang'd Niobe to stone, whose plenteous tears
 Still trickle down the rocks, while to her groans
 The streams of Hermus murmur, and the heights
 Of Sipylus reecho, cloth'd in mist :
 To them who pass at distance by the hill
 She seems a woman worn with woe, to them
 Who view her near, a fragment of the rock.
 Loud was the noise of battle ; in the dust
 The flower of either army lay ; nor ceas'd
 Penthesilea to put forth her might ;
 Before her fled the Greeks, while she pursu'd
 As the blue-rolling billow of the deep
 Chaces the ships, that, with their white sails spread,

Run gallantly before the rising gale.

Smiling severe she cried, "O dogs! to-day

" Ye shall atone for Priam's many woes ;

" For none of all your host shall live to see

" Parents or wives, escaping from my spear ;

" But ye shall lie unburied on the plain,

" The food of vultures. Where your mighty now ?

" Where is Æacides, and where the son

" Of Tydeus ? Where is Ajax ? (for ye say

" That these are powerful in the fight)—lo! they

" Are loath to meet the fury of my arm,

" Lest I dispatch them to the land of ghosts."

She said, and onwards drove the routed foe,

And now she ply'd her axe, and now her lance,

While her fleet courser bore her ready bow,

And quiver full of arrows. Troy's best sons

Follow'd the Amazon, a dauntless band,

Brothers, and friends, of Hector great in war :

Fierce at the Greeks they launch'd their ashen spears,
 Who fell before them, thick, as the sere leaves
 In Autumn, or the drops of rain that come
 Dancing to earth ; and with the riders fell
 Their horses pierc'd by darts, and o'er them rush'd
 The Trojan steeds careeringly, and trod
 Their panting carcasses, with bloody hoofs.
 But when the Trojans saw the maiden's might,
 And how she scour'd the plain, like some black storm,
 (That tears the bosom of the darken'd deep,
 When now the Sun with Capricorn abides,)

Thus, by vain hopes elated, one exclaim'd ;
 “ Sure some Immortal, in this happy day,
 “ Hath left the sky, to combat on our side,
 “ By Jove commission'd, from whose lofty line
 “ Great Priam springs ; for not of earthly race
 “ Is she who leads our warriors, raging thus,
 “ In mail reluctant, mid the battle's heat.

“ ’Tis or Bellona, or the blue-ey’d maid,
 “ Or golden-hair’d Latona’s virgin child !
 “ I trust full surely that her arm to-day
 “ Will causé dire slaughter of the Greeks, and fire
 “ Their smoking ships, in which to Ilion came
 “ War and unnumber’d woes.” He said, nor knew
 That dire misfortune o’er him hung, and o’er
 The wretched Trojans, and the warrior-queen :
 For not as yet the tidings of the fight
 Had mighty Ajax and Achilles heard,
 Who at the tomb of lov’d Patroclus lay,
 Indulging fruitless grief with many a groan.
 Them had some hostile deity detain’d
 Apart from battle, that the flower of Greece
 Might fall beneath Penthesilea’s arm.
 And still the dauntless Amazon pursu’d
 Her bloody work, nor threw her spear in vain,
 But pierc’d the coward back of him that fled,

Or gor'd the breast of an advancing foe.
 Conceal'd in clouds Fate mark'd the fight, and gave
 This glory to the maiden, soon, alas !
 Destin'd to fall by Peleus' matchless son.
 As when the wanton heifer in the spring
 Breaks thro' the dewy gardens pale, and roams
 Amid luxuriant beds of opening blooms,
 Devouring some, and trampling some to earth ;
 So rush'd the martial maiden thro' the fray,
 And now the Greeks she slew, and now she chas'd.

Meantime the dames of Troy at distance view'd
 The conflict, wond'ring at the maiden's deeds ;
 And straight the eager love of battle seiz'd
 Hippodamia, (whom her sire had given
 A bride to brave Tisiphonus,) and thus,
 Exciting all around her, she exclaim'd ;
 " Come, friends ! let us too in our hearts conceive

“ A martial spirit, such as now inflames
 “ Our warriors fighting for their native walls ;
 “ For not in strength are we inferior much
 “ To men ; the same our eyes, our limbs the same ;
 “ One common light we see, one air we breathe ;
 “ Nor different is the food we eat : what then
 “ Denied to us, hath heaven on man bestow'd ?
 “ O let us hasten to the glorious war !
 “ Behold ! where yon fair Amazon excels
 “ Our heroes in the strife, and dauntless fights,
 “ Far from her kindred, and her native town,
 “ To aid a foreign monarch : Then shall we,
 “ On whom misfortune presses ; who have seen
 “ Our husbands, and our children cold in death ;
 “ Who for our sires have rais'd the loud lament,
 “ And for our brothers ; (since we each have known
 “ Some dire calamity,) on whom besides
 “ The expectation hangs of servitude ;

“ Shall we, so much afflicted, now delay
“ To mingle in the war? ’Tis better sure
“ To fall in battle, than hereafter led
“ Poor widow’d captives from our much-lov’d home,
“ To swell the victor’s train, while we behold
“ Red fires consuming Ilion’s sacred towers.”

Thus she exclaim’d, and all the women felt
The love of battle, and they long’d to rush,
In armour clad, to guard their native walls:
And as the bees when winter now is o’er,
Murmur within the hive, while they prepare
To issue forth, and roam the flowery fields,
And one excites the other to make haste;
So, eager for the fight, the Trojan dames
Each other fir’d; and seizing deadly arms,
They cast the distaff and the wool aside.
And now full sure, upon the bloody plain,
They must have died beside their slaughter’d friends,

Had not Theano, for her prudence fam'd,
 Restrain'd their fury. "Wherefore thus," she cried,
 "Haste ye, infatuate, to the fight, unskill'd
 "In deeds of-war, and most unfit to cope
 "With heroes train'd to arms, the flower of Greece?
 "Yon Amazon was bred to war, and taught
 "To mount the steed, and mingle in the strife;
 "Her mind is dauntless, and her limbs are strong,
 "And Mars, they say, begot her: think not then
 "To equal her in valour or in might.
 "Back to your homes return, and ply the loom,
 "And leave the conduct of the war to men.
 "Let hope once more your bosoms cheer, for, lo!
 "The Grecians fall before the swords of Troy,
 "And till the foe hath closely girt our towers,
 "We shall not need the aid of female hands."
 She said, nor did the women disobey,
 Content to view the battle from afar.

Still rag'd the combat on the plain, and still
Before the Amazon the routed Greeks
Fell in huge heaps, as by a spotted pard
The bleating goats are slain ; nor longer now
Did they attempt her fury to resist.
Some cast their arms away, and fled the fight,
And some, exhausted, on the bloody ground
Lay down to die, and frightened steeds were seen
Masterless flying ; while triumphant joy
The maiden felt, and her exulting bands.
As when a ruffian tempest takes the trees
By their green tops, and some uprooted quite
Dashes to earth with all their blossom'd boughs,
Of some it breaks in twain the trunks, while flowers
And shiver'd branches strew the neighb'ring fields ;
So lay the Grecians in the dust, o'erthrown
By fate, and by the maid's unerring lance.
But now the noise of battle reach'd the ear

Of Ajax, and he thus address'd his friend ;
 “ Achilles, hark ! mine ear hath caught the sound
 “ Of distant battle—let us seek the ships,
 “ Lest, while we linger here, the sons of Troy
 “ Give them to flames, and that to us would be
 “ Reproach disgraceful. From high Jove our sires
 “ Derive their lineage, and in former days
 “ They, while Laomedon the sceptre held,
 “ Laid waste, with Hercules, the Trojan towers.
 “ O be our deeds and our success like theirs,
 “ Since not inferior is our strength !” He said,
 Nor did Achilles not assent, for he
 Himself had heard the tumult of the fight.
 Straight to the war they bent their way, and loud
 Their armour rattled, as they strode along
 In their great strength exulting, which on them
 Minerva, buckler'd goddess, had bestow'd.
 Joy seiz'd the fainting Greeks when they beheld

The valiant pair advancing, in their port
 Like to the giants of Titanic race,
 Who strove to scale the starry heaven, and mount
 Upon th' accumulated hills. And now
 Before them fell the sons of Troy, as falls
 The helpless flock, by two fierce lions torn,
 While careless shepherds wander far away.
 First Ajax slew Deiochus, and next
 Hyllus, Eurynomus, and many more :
 By Peleus' son Antandra died, and then
 Hippothoe, Antibrote, and fair
 Harmothoe, and Polymusa brave.
 Thus rag'd the twain mid phalanxes overthrown,
 As flames that wanton in the shady wood,
 Fann'd by the winds.

Penthesilea now

Perceiv'd them moving thro' the ranks, and rush'd
 To meet them ; and as hunters wait th' attack

Of hungry tigress, when she onward comes,
 Her brindl'd sides still lashing with her tail ;
 So stood the heroes with uplifted spears
 Waiting the Amazon. A dart she threw
 First at Achilles ; on his ample shield
 Lighting, it started back with broken point,
 Such was the virtue of Vulcanian arms.
 Another javelin straight she took, and aim'd
 At Ajax, thus loud threatening both ; " One spear
 " Hath left my hand in vain, but I expect,
 " With this which now I hold, to lay you both
 " Low in the dust, who boast yourselves to be
 " Chief of the Greeks ; that Ilion's hapless sons
 " May feel a respite from the woes of war.
 " Advance, and try my strength ! that ye may know
 " What valour dwells within a female heart.
 " Of mortal race I spring not, for my sire
 " Is the great god of battle, mailed Mars,

“ Insatiate of the fight ; and therefore I

“ Am far superior to the seed of men.”

Thus spoke she vaunting, and the heroes laugh'd ;
Quick flew her spear, and pierc'd the silver greave
Of Ajax, but it enter'd not the flesh
By fate restrain'd : the warrior turn'd away
Contemptuous, and left the dauntless maid
To fall by Peleus' son, as falls the dove
By the fierce hawk.

Penthesilea groan'd

When she beheld her weapons cast in vain.
While thus with cruel scorn Achilles cried ;
“ Woman ! how empty were thy boastful threats,
“ As eager for the fight thou did'st advance
“ 'Gainst us, to whom no peers on earth are found !
“ For we are sprung from Saturn's thund'ring son,
“ And Hector, when he view'd us from afar
“ Rush to the combat, shook with sudden dread :

“ Mine was the spear that laid him low, in spite
 “ Of all his valour, and I deem thee mad
 “ Who dar’st thus boldly face me ; but no more
 “ Shalt thou the golden morning see, nor shall
 “ Thy vaunted parent snatch thee from my rage,
 “ Doom’d now to perish, as the timid hind
 “ Dies on the mountains, by a lion slain.
 “ Hast thou not heard that by my arm have fall’n
 “ Unnumber’d warriors, whose disfigur’d limbs
 “ Red Xanthus rolls in eddies to the deep?
 “ Sure, if the tale has reach’d thine ear, the Gods
 “ Have driv’n thee mad, and sent thee here to meet
 “ Thy death.” So saying a long spear he rais’d
 With deadly point, which skilful Chiron made,
 And sudden pierc’d the maiden’s tender breast,
 O’er the right orb of snow, and from the wound
 Dark gush’d the crimson tide ; her drooping hand
 Let fall the weighty axe, and gathering clouds

Hover'd before her eyes, while thrilling pains
Shot thro' her body. Yet did life remain,
And on the hero with bewilder'd look
She gaz'd; and now she thought it best to draw
Her sword, and wait the onset of the foe,
As he advanc'd to drag her from her steed;
And now she deem'd it best the hero's knees
Suppliant to clasp, and offer plenteous store
Of gold and brass, imploring him to spare
The life of one not older than himself.
While thus she waver'd in her mind, the Gods
Infus'd great wrath into Achilles' heart;
Her and her courser he at once transfix'd
With fatal thrust, and down to earth she fell,
In modest attitude, above her steed,
And on her face, defil'd with dust, she lay,
Writhing around the spear. So falls the fir,
Uptorn by Boreas, that beside some stream

Hath flourish'd long, the beauty of the vale.

But when the Trojans saw the maiden slain,

They fled to Ilion from the bloody field,

Mourning the daughter of the mighty Mars,

While o'er her body thus the victor proud

Laughing exulted ; “ Lie thou there, the food

“ Of birds and beasts ! Ah wretch ! what counsellor

“ In evil hour advis'd thee to oppose

“ Thyself to me ? Perchance thou didst expect

“ Smear'd with the gore of Argives to return

“ From battle, and from Priam to obtain

“ Rich gifts ; but heaven hath otherwise decreed,

“ And thou hast perish'd in thy prime by me,

“ The light of Greece ; the bane of thee and Troy.

“ Ah fool ! to leave the loom, and female tasks,

“ For war ; which e'en the bravest dread.” He spoke,

And from the body of the warrior-maid,

And from her steed, he drew the spear, and both

Heav'd for a moment: next, her beamy helm,
 That shed a trembling radiance, like the sun,
 Or Jove's own lightnings, from her head he took,
 And all her lovely features were display'd
 Serene in death. The Greeks, when they beheld
 The maiden, wonder'd, since they saw her fair
 As any Goddess; for in armour sheen
 Array'd, she lay, like Dian, when she sleeps
 Among the mountains, wearied with the chase:
 Venus, the paramour of mighty Mars,
 Increas'd her beauty e'en in death, that grief
 Might touch Achilles' bosom; many wish'd
 That they, returning to their native land,
 Might share the bed of such a beauteous wife,
 And the proud victor mourn'd that he had slain
 The valiant maid, nor borne her as a bride
 To Phthia, fam'd for generous steeds; for she
 Was beautiful, and faultless in her form,

As are the habitants of heaven.

Now Mars

Sudden from blue Olympus downwards rush'd,
 Pierc'd by keen sorrow for his daughter dear,
 Whose fate to him the winged Breezes told,
 The progeny of Boreas. Down he flew
 Swift as the tempest, and on Ida's top
 Lighted; the mountain knew the Deity,
 And all her deep-rent caverns, her long vales,
 And lucid streams were shaken. And full sure
 He to the Myrmidons a day of woe
 Would have afforded, had not angry Jove
 Sent thunders from on high, and forked fires,
 That flash'd incessant round the God of war,
 And play'd before his feet. Unwillingly
 From his fell purpose he desists, and turns
 Another way, (for all th' Olympians dread
 The majesty of Jove,) else headlong hurl'd

With flaming thunderbolts he must have lain
Amid the Titans in Tartarian gloom.

Meantime the Grecians traversing the plain
Stript their dead foes, intent on bloody spoils,
But great Achilles felt exceeding grief,
As on the body of the maid he gaz'd,
Mourning for her not less than for the death
Of his belov'd Patroclus.

* * * * * * *

Now the sons
Of Atreus, touch'd with pity for the fate,
And much admiring the surpassing form,
Of the brave Amazon, restor'd her corse,
Her mail, and courser, to the Trojan king,
Who in the tomb of great Laomedon
Desir'd to bury them with honours due.
Before the walls of Troy he rais'd a pyre

Lofty and broad ; upon its top he laid
 Penthesilea, and beside her plac'd
 Such riches as should feed the funeral fires
 Of wealthy queens. Devouring Vulcan quick
 Consum'd the body, and the people round
 Pour'd fragrant wine to quench the hissing flame.
 Her gather'd bones mid ointment in an urn
 They stor'd, but first they wrapt them in the fat
 Of a fair heifer rear'd on Ida's hill ;
 Then in the tomb of great Laomedon
 Laid them with tears and lamentations loud
 As if they mourn'd a daughter. By her side
 They gave to earth the Amazons who fell
 With her in battle ; nor did Atreus' sons
 Forbid the Trojans from the field to bear
 The bodies of their kindred, since no more
 Ought rage against a slaughter'd foe to dwell

Within a hero's breast, but he should feel
Some touch of pity for a brave man dead.

ARRIVAL OF MEMNON

AT TROY;

HIS VALIANT DEEDS, AND DEATH.

From Book II.

ἡ δ' ἐπὶ ποταμῷ
Μεμνονος οὐρανίην νεφέλην ἐνέδυσατο μητῆρ,
Φεγγος ὑποκίευσάσα κατὰ φέρος ἡμάτος Ἡώς.

Tryphiod. 29.

ARRIVAL OF MEMNON

AT TROY;

HIS VALIANT DEEDS, AND DEATH.

AND now the fair Aurora's valiant son,
Memnon, the ruler of the swarthy race
Of Ethiopia, with a numerous band,
To Ilion came; and all the Trojans felt
Exceeding joy, like that which sailors feel,
If thro' the sable clouds they view the Bear
Bright peering, when the tempest long hath rag'd,
And wrapt the heavens in gloom. But Priam most
Rejoicing, trusted that the Ethiop troops,
A powerful host, would burn the ships of Greece;
And now to Memnon precious gifts he gave,

And led him to the feast ; and, while the bowls
 Sparkle with wine, the story he relates
 Of all his sorrows, and describes the chiefs,
 The flower of Greece. Then, in return, his guest
 Tells how fair-hair'd Aurora on his sire
 Bestow'd perpetual life, and next recounts
 The many wonders of the ocean-waves,
 And of those distant regions of the earth,
 Thro' which he pass'd, while journeying from the clime
 Where Phœbus rises, till he reach'd the walls
 Of sacred Troy, and Ida's fountful hill.
 He also tells how 'mid the Lycian wilds
 The Solymi oppos'd him, and forbade
 His progress thro' their country, but they met
 Rout and dire slaughter. To his words with joy
 Old Priam listening, seiz'd his hand, and said ;
 “ Memnon ! the Gods have let me now behold
 “ Thee and thy warriors in my hall, and soon

“ I hope that they will greater favour shew
 “ To me unfortunate, when I shall view
 “ The Grecians fall in heaps beneath thy spear ;
 “ For more than all the other sons of earth
 “ Art thou in form like the immortals. Come !
 “ With wine delight thy soul, and let us think
 “ Of war to-morrow.” Thus the monarch spoke,
 Then pledg’d the chief in a capacious cup,
 Golden and fram’d by art divine ; (a gift
 Which to Almighty Jove lame Vulcan brought
 Upon his nuptial day, when he espous’d
 The queen of Love ; the sire of Gods bestow’d
 The cup on Dardanus, who gave it next
 To Erichthonius ; Tros receiv’d it then,
 And left it, with his wealth, to be possess’d
 By Ilus ; he to great Laomedon
 Gave it ; and last to Priam’s lot it fell,
 Who hop’d to leave it to his sons, but heaven

Had otherwise decreed :) the beauteous cup
 Memnon admiring took, and said ; “ To boast,
 “ And vauntingly to promise to perform
 “ Deeds of emprise, while at the board we sit,
 “ Is most unseemly : in the hour of fight,
 “ Which proves the worth of man, thou shalt behold
 “ If I am valiant, or of coward heart.
 “ But let us now to sleep, nor during night
 “ Protract the feast ; for on the battle’s eve
 “ Much wine is hurtful, and the want of rest
 “ Is grievous.” Thus the swarthy leader spoke,
 On whom with wonder gazing Priam said ;
 “ No longer, Memnon, at the feast remain
 “ Than suits thy pleasure. Sorry should I be
 “ Him to detain, who longs to quit the board,
 “ Or from the banquet him to drive, who wills
 “ To stay.” He said, and straight together rose
 The host and well-pleas’d guests ; and to his couch

Each then repairing laid him down to sleep.

Now in the starry dome of heaven the Gods
 Were feasting, whom the lightning-gatherer Jove,
 With bosom thoughtful on the coming war
 Address'd ; “ Immortals ! of to-morrow's fight
 “ Ye know the dire disasters ; from his car
 “ Shall many a chief be hurl'd, and fiery steeds
 “ Beside their lifeless rulers on the plain
 “ Shall gasp in death. Let then no God approach
 “ My throne, to clasp my knees, and to entreat
 “ That from his much-lov'd offspring or his friend
 “ Destruction may be turn'd, since e'en to me
 “ Relentless Fate is deaf.” He said, and all
 Th' Olympians sorrowing sought their golden beds,
 For not the power of slumber do the Gods
 Disdain to court.

When o'er the dewy hills

Resplendent Lucifer, whose sparkling gem
Awakes the reaper to his pleasing toil,
Was bright in heaven, and when her rosy gates
Aurora open'd with unwilling hand,
The valiant Memnon started from his couch,
Eager for war; and then the sons of Troy,
And the bold Æthiops, cloth'd their limbs in mail,
And all th' auxiliar bands. Now from the walls
They rush'd impetuous forth, like rolling clouds
That fill the angry skies when tempests howl,
Or like voracious locusts, that in swarms
Borne thro' the darken'd air upon the gale,
Destroy the promise of the youthful year.
Beneath their feet the dust, like eddying smoke,
Rose as they scour'd the plain; but when the Greeks
Beheld them from afar, their arms they snatch'd,
Trusting in Peleus' son, who mid them stood,
Huge as a Titan, glorying in his car

And deathless steeds. As when from ocean's depth,
 Whose waves cærulean glow with molten gold,
 Phœbus arises, dazzling eye of day,
 So shone Achilles in refulgent arms.

Nor less conspicuous mid the bands of Troy
 Memnon appear'd, like mailed Mars, and all
 The troops rush'd on, exulting in their chief.
 And now the hostile armies meet, and close
 In battle, plying with unwearied strength
 Their ashen spears, and dismal groans are heard.

As is the sound of streams that to the sea
 Impetuous flow, swoln by the pelting showers,
 That Jove sends down from black, fire-flashing,
 clouds,

Such was the noise of war upon the plain,
 For earth resounded, and the loud uproar
 Reach'd the blue vault of heaven. Pelides slew
 Thalius and Mentes, both of valiant heart,

And many heroes more he struck to ground,
 As from their deep foundations the wild blast
 Hurls lofty towers. But on the other side
 Aurora's son mov'd thro' the fight, and shed
 Dismay around; and Pheron first he slew
 Piercing his bosom with long lance, and next
 Ereuthus, both enamour'd of the strife,
 Who left their native Thryon by the flood
 Of fair Alpheus, following in the train
 Of aged Nestor when he came to Troy.
 These Memnon slew, and of their arms despoil'd,
 Then rush'd with fury 'gainst the Pylian chief;
 But brave Antilochus before him ran
 To guard his sire, and cast a quivering spear
 At the dark prince, who quickly bent his head
 The blow avoiding, and the weapon pass'd
 O'er his plum'd helm, and gor'd an Ethiop's breast.
 When Memnon saw his lov'd companion fall,

As the fierce lion flies against the boar,
 He rush'd on Nestor's warlike son, but he
 Rais'd a large stone, and hurl'd it at the foe ;
 The weight descended on his shining casque,
 With clattering noise, tho' harmless ; anger then
 Seiz'd bright Aurora's son, and thro' the heart
 Of young Antilochus he drove his spear,
 And life for ever fled. But when the Greeks
 Beheld his death, they felt exceeding grief ;
 And most his father, hoary Nestor, mourn'd,
 For no affliction more severe awaits
 The race of men, than when a father views
 Before his eyes the offspring of his love
 Untimely slain : then loudly thus he call'd
 On Thrasymedès ; “ Hither haste, my son !
 “ And from the body of thy brother dear
 “ Aid me to chase the murderer, or let us
 “ Together die in the attempt. If fear

" Restrain thy steps, no longer must thou boast
 " That thou art Nestor's son, nor kindred claim
 " With Periclymenus of high renown,
 " Who dar'd to meet e'en Hercules in arms.
 " Haste fearless then ! for to the weaker side
 " Necessity unwonted strength supplies."

He said, and straight t' avenge his brother's death
 Rush'd Thrasymedes sorrowing ; with him went
 Phereus, the lov'd companion and the friend
 Of young Antiochus. As mid the brakes
 Of cloud-capt mountains, when the hunters keen
 Assault the snouted boar, he boldly turns
 To meet their onset, so great Memnon turn'd
 Waiting the heroes. On they came, and threw
 Their spears in vain, for hovering o'er her child
 Aurora bade the deadly weapons fly
 Far from his body ; but they did not light
 Unstain'd with blood, for one thrill'd thro' the breast

Of Meges' son, Polyinnus, and one
 O'erthrew Laomedon. And Memnon now,
 Regardless of the twain, who 'gainst him came,
 Was stripping from the limbs of Nestor's son
 His brazen mail ; when loud th' unhappy sire,
 Who not far off perceiv'd the cruel deed,
 Call'd on his train t' advance, and snatch the corse.
 And would himself have dar'd the Ethiop chief
 From his high car, and in the dust full sure
 He must have lain beside his slaughter'd son,
 Had not great Memnon (for he reverenc'd much
 His years, that equall'd his own father's age,)
 Address'd him thus as he approach'd ; “ O sire !
 “ It is not fit that I should fight with thee ;
 “ For I expected to have found thee strong
 “ In manhood's prime ; and my bold spirit hop'd
 “ To meet a foe well-worthy of my spear ;
 “ Back from the strife, and quit the bloody field !

“ Lest I unwilling strike thee to the earth
 “ Beside thy breathless son, and lest mankind
 “ Deem thee a madman, who in battle sought'st
 “ A match unequal.” Memnon said, and him
 Thus Nestor answer'd ; “ Foolish are thy words,
 “ O eastern prince ! for men will never say
 “ That I am mad, because I tried to chase
 “ From the cold body of my much-lov'd son
 “ His ruthless slayer. In the flower of youth
 “ Exulting, thou art arrogant and vain.
 “ Would that I too were in my prime !—and then
 “ No more thy friends should have to vaunt of thee,
 “ And of thy valour ; but a weight of years
 “ Now press upon me. As an aged lion
 “ Is from the sheep-fold driven by the dog,
 “ Unable to resist, since all his teeth
 “ Are worn by time, and in his stiffen'd limbs
 “ Strength dwells no longer ; so am I repell'd

“ By thee, the vigour of my early days

“ For ever gone. To many heroes still

“ Am I superior, and I yield to few.”

He said retreating from the fight, and left

The body of his son : with him retir'd

Phereus and Thrasymedes, and his train,

Unable to withstand great Memnon's might,

Who chas'd them o'er the plain. As when a stream

Rolls in deep eddies from the lofty hills,

Its banks o'erflowing with resounding noise,

While Jove hath shrouded the blue sky with clouds

In horrid strife commingling, that send forth

Fire and loud thunders, and while torrent rain

Floods all the plashy ground ; such tumult rose,

When Memnon drove the Grecians o'er the field

To Helle's tide, and pressing on their rear

Caus'd direful slaughter, deluging with gore

The slippery earth. Round him his chosen friends

Fought dauntless, Nychius, and Alcioneus,
 Cladon, Meneclus, and Asiades,
 And many more, all eager for the strife,
 And trusting in the valour of their prince.
 But now Meneclus, as he chas'd the Greeks,
 Was by old Nestor slain, and Memnon wroth
 To view his fall, destroy'd full many a foe.
 As when the hunter, with his joyous train
 Of active youths, drives huddling to the toils
 An herd of stags, then slays them with his spear,
 While loudly bark the dogs ; so Memnon caus'd
 Dire havoc of the Greeks, who from him fled
 As in a valley fly the startled kine
 And sheep, to shun the fury of a stone,
 That from the mountain-top by lightning riv'n
 Rolls down with horrid crash.

'To Pelcus' son

Now Nestor sorrowing came, and thus he spoke ;

“ Achilles, bulwark of the Grecian host !
 “ My much-lov’d son Antilochus lies dead,
 “ And the proud victor swarthy Memnon keeps
 “ His shining mail. O aid me, mighty chief !
 “ To save the body from devouring dogs ;
 “ For he alone deserves the name of friend,
 “ Who, when his dear companion is no more,
 “ Still cherishes his memory, and longs
 “ ‘T’ avenge his death.” He said, and Peleus’ son
 Was seiz’d with grief, and looking o’er the plain
 Beheld where Memnon chas’d the routed Greeks,
 And ’gainst him straight with burning rage he rush’d,
 Leaving the bands of Troy, who from his spear
 Were flying. But the bright Aurora’s son
 Rais’d a huge stone (which careful husbandmen
 Had as a land-mark plac’d) and hurl’d it full
 At swift Achilles, who with lifted shield
 Receiv’d the weight, and who advancing quick

On foot, (for he his matchless steeds had left
 Apart from battle,) with protended spear
 On the right shoulder struck his valiant foe.
 The wounded Memnon at Achilles aim'd
 His forceful lance, and in his arm the point
 Enter'd, and forth the red blood gush'd, while thus
 Aurora's son, in vain exulting, cried ;
 “ Now shalt thou surely fall beneath my might,
 “ Wretch! who hast slain the bravest youths of Troy,
 “ Boasting that thou of heroes art the chief,
 “ And from a Nereid born ; but thou to-day
 “ Shalt cease thy vaunts for ever, for I spring
 “ From blest Aurora, goddess of the dawn,
 “ And me th' Hesperides, as lilies fair,
 “ Rear'd in their bowers beside the ocean-streams.
 “ I hold thy strength in war but slight, thy birth
 “ Being than mine less noble, since I know
 “ How much an heavenly goddess doth excel

“ A Nereid of the deep. My mother gives
 “ The rosy light (a precious benefit)
 “ To Gods and men, who in the gift rejoice,
 “ But still inglorious doth thy mother sit
 “ Low in the sunless caverns of the sea
 “ Amid the wallowing fishes ; therefore I
 “ Deem her most worthless, when compar’d to them
 “ Who tread th’ Olympian floor.” He said, and him
 Æacides bespoke ; “ Of reason sure
 “ Thy mind, O Memnon ! is depriv’d, that thus
 “ Incites thee here to meet me in the strife,
 “ Who am to thee superior far, in form,
 “ In strength, and birth ; since from great Jove I
 spring,
 “ And from the blood of Nereus, who begot
 “ The fifty Nereids ; them th’ Olympian Gods
 “ Honour, but Thetis most they prize, for she
 “ The ivy-crowned Bacchus in her halls

“ Hid from the fury of the Thracian king,
 “ And she lame Vulcan in her home receiv’d
 “ When his dread sire had cast him from the sky ;
 “ Nay more, the fetters of almighty Jove
 “ She loos’d. But thou ere long shalt feel that I
 “ Of a true goddess am the son, when thro’
 “ Thy breast my spear hath thrill’d, which pierc’d
 the heart
 “ Of Hector, who my lov’d Patroclus slew,
 “ And which is destin’d now to lay thee low
 “ Avenging my Antilochus—but why
 “ Stand we, like children, combating with words,
 “ Vaunting our lineage, while to deadly fight
 “ Mars doth impel us.” Thus he spoke, and each
 Drew his long sword, and ’gainst the other rush’d.
 Upon their bucklers, which by art divine
 Vulcan had fram’d, loud rung the clanging blows,
 While crest to crest was nodding, and their helms

Clash'd frequent. More than mortal strength did

Jove

On both bestow, and made them like to Gods,
 And Discord joy'd to view the fight. And now
 Between the shield, and lofty crest, they aim'd
 Their blows, and now they strove to pierce the flesh
 Between the greaves, and variegated plate
 That guards the breast.

* * * * *

But now from starry heaven
 Look'd down th' Olympian Powers to mark the fight;
 And some the son of Peleus most admir'd,
 And some, the swarthy Memnon. In the deep
 Amid her green-hair'd sisters, Thetis sat
 Trembling; while sad Aurora in her car
 Beheld the combat, and around her stood
 With downcast eyes the daughters of the Sun,
 In that bright circle which great Jove hath given

Unto their sire to run his annual course.
And then full sure among the blessed Gods
Contention must have risen, had not their king
Sent to the warlike pair two Fates ; the one
Of mournful look to Memnon bent her way ;
The other sought Achilles, of serene
And joyous aspect ; and th' Immortals all
Utter'd a shout, of gladness some, and some
Of sorrow. But regardless of the Fates
That join'd them, still the matchless heroes fought :
Thou would'st have deem'd them of Titanic race,
For, whether they their swords unwearied ply'd,
Or at each other fragments of huge stones
Impetuous hurl'd, still neither to his foe
Yielded one foot of ground, but both, like rocks,
Stood tow'ring, proud of their celestial birth,
And cloth'd in might. Long did they thus contend,
(The while around them fought their valiant friends,)

Till Discord held the scales of war on high,
 And lo! one sunk; and straight thro' Memnon's
 breast

Achilles drove his sword, and the sharp point
 Came out behind, and life for ever fled
 In a black gush of blood, while down to earth
 He fell, and loudly rung his gorgeous mail.
 Then stript the Myrmidons his corse; then ran
 The Trojans from the fight, and like a storm
 Achilles chas'd them.

But Aurora hid

With many a groan, her radiant face in clouds,
 Diffusing darkness o'er the troubled sky;
 And, at her bidding, quick together rush'd
 The Winds, her offspring, to the Trojan plain,
 And crowding round great Memnon's corse, aloft
 Caught it, and mourning bore it thro' the air.
 As on they mov'd, from his cold limbs distill'd

Large drops of gore ; and these the Gods collect
Into one stream, and make a river fair,
By them who dwell near Ida's woody ridge
Call'd Paphlagonius: when returns the day
On which great Memnon died, its waves assume
A crimson hue, and from their depth ascends
A noisome exhalation, and the smell
Of blood that flows from some corrupted wound.
Swiftly the Winds their mournful burden bore
Skimming the ground, nor did the Ethiop band
(Of whom the war had spar'd a few) remain
Ling'ring behind their leader, for the Gods
Gave them surpassing swiftness, and they ran
Following the Winds with lamentations loud.
As when with piteous howl the faithful hounds
Follow their master, whom the boar hath slain,
And whom the sorrowing huntsmen in their arms
Bear thro' the forest, so the Ethiop band,

Wrapt in thick clouds, pursued the winged Winds,
 And in amazement Greeks and Trojans stood
 To view them vanish from the plain.

But when

The Winds at the deep-rolling stream arriv'd
 Of old Æsepus, (where in after times
 The daughters of the river rais'd a mound
 O'er Memnon's corse, and planted waving trees,)
 They laid the body in a beauteous grove.
 Now set the Sun, and gliding down from heaven
 Aurora came with tearful eyes ; on her
 Attend the twelve fair-tressed maids, who guard
 The circle in which Phœbus moves, and guide
 The changeful year. With piercing cries they
 mourn

For Memnon, and the Pleiades with them
 Mingle loud lamentations, while the hills
 And deep Æsepus' echoing streams reply.

Then sad Aurora clasp'd the pallid form
 Of her lov'd son, and thus exclaim'd, " My child !
 " Untimely hast thou perish'd, and to me
 " Hast caus'd unceasing sorrow. Ne'er will I
 " Pour on the Gods my rosy light again,
 " But down to Pluto's dark, infernal, realm
 " Will I descend, where 'mid the lurid air
 " Thy Shade flits mournful ; that e'en Saturn's son
 " May grieve, when he astonish'd shall behold
 " Chaos return, and that he then may know
 " That I, who cherish all things by my rays,
 " Am not less noble than a Nereid—then,
 " To fill the place of me despis'd, aloft
 " Let him bear Thetis to the sky, to give
 " Light to the world ; for I will headlong haste
 " To Pluto's gloomy mansion, lest my beams
 " Illume the paths of him who slaughter'd thee."
 She said, and from her streaming eyes pour'd forth

Ambrosial tears above the senseless corse,
 And ancient Night, to please her daughter dear,
 Shed treble darkness o'er the starless sky.
 For Memnon much the Trojans griev'd, but grief
 Mingl'd with joy the Grecians felt, the might
 Of Peleus' son extolling, and with groans
 Bewailing young Antilochus. And still
 Aurora mourn'd, nor thought upon the dawn,
 While her fleet steeds beside her stamp'd the ground,
 Eager to paw the fleecy clouds, when Jove
 Dreadfully thunder'd, wroth at her delay ;
 Then shook the heaving world, and terror seiz'd
 Aurora, tho' immortal.

Now the troops

Of Ethiopia laid their chief in earth
 With lamentations loud ; and while they mourn'd,
 Aurora chang'd them into black-plum'd birds,
 That cut the liquid air, and still retain

The name of their lov'd leader. O'er his tomb
 Hovering, they scatter dust, and to enhance
 His funeral honours, in two bands distinct,
 Meet in dire conflict. Long they fight, until
 From either party comes a champion bold
 To join in single strife ; nor fails the war
 Till one or both drop lifeless on the tomb.

Aurora joy'd to view the fight, and now
 The lovely Hours, in robes of varied hue,
 With sweet persuasion led her up the sky.
 Still did she grieve, but fearing much the threats
 Of Jove, who rules the swelling of the sea,
 The verdant earth, and star-bespangled heaven,
 No longer she delay'd ; before her mov'd
 The Pleiades ; and then the gates of light
 Her glowing hands unbarr'd, and pour'd the day.

THE
DEATH OF ACHILLES.

From Book III.

τεβνηκεν, ανδρος ουδενος, θεου δ' υπο
τοξευτος.

Soph. Phil. 334.

THE
DEATH OF ACHILLES.

NOW met the hostile armies on the plain,
And quick in conflict join'd; beneath the might
Of Peleus' son unnumber'd Trojans fell,
And all the grass was red with gore, and scarce
Xanthus and Simois to the sea could run,
By floating dead retarded. To their walls
He drove the trembling enemy, and sure
He would have slain them all; and to the ground
Dashing the gates unhing'd, or breaking sheer
Their massive bars, he would have op'd a way
For his exulting warriors to have sack'd

The wealthy town ; had not Apollo left
 The starry mansions, and confronted straight
 The victor. Loudly rung his quiver, stor'd
 With shafts that give th' immedicable wound ;
 Flash'd from his eye-balls angry fires ; and shook
 The heaving earth, while dreadfully the God,
 (Thinking to daunt Pelides, and to save
 The hapless Trojans from his deadly spear,)
 Exclaim'd, " Back, son of Peleus ! from the bands
 " Of Troy restrain thine arm, or thou shalt feel
 " 'The wrath of an Immortal !' " Thus he spoke,
 But great Achilles at his awful voice
 Not trembl'd, (for the Fates severe were now
 Hovering around him,) and with haughty tone
 And loud he answer'd, " Why, Latona's son !
 " Aiding perfidious 'Troy, dost thou compel
 " Me, tho' unwilling, to contend with Gods?
 " Once did'st thou grieve me heretofore, in clouds

“ Snatching devoted Hector from my rage,
 “ In whom the Trojans gloried—but I now
 “ Bid thee begone, and seek the seats above,
 “ Lest thee, immortal as thou art, I strike.”
 He said, then turn’d away, and chas’d the foe,
 That fled in wild disorder.

But the God

Burn’d with exceeding wrath, and thus apart
 Exclaim’d; “ Infuriate madman! Jove himself
 “ No more will brook this insolence, that dares
 “ Defy the Powers of heaven.” He said, and wrapt
 His form in mist, and from his twanging bow
 An arrow sent, that thro’ the ankle thrill’d
 Of Peleus’ son: pain seiz’d him, and he fell
 Like some tall tower, by th’ earthquake’s toppling
 shock

Hurl’d to the plain precipitate. Around
 He cast his eyes, and then with fearful voice

He loudly call'd: "What hidden foe hath sent
 " This deadly arrow? Let him boldly come,
 " And face me, that my gory spear may pass
 " Right thro' his entrails, and his soul descend
 " To Hades; for I know full well that now
 " There breathes no warrior, who in equal fight
 " Could conquer me, tho' in his bosom dwelt
 " A dauntless heart, and brazen were his limbs.
 " The coward only strives from secret post
 " The brave to vanquish: let my foe advance,
 " E'en tho' he be a God!—and now I guess
 " That 'tis Apollo who hath laid me low,
 " For my lov'd mother said, in former days,
 " That I beside the Scæan gate must fall,
 " Slain by his arrows, and her words are sooth."

He spoke, and from th' immedicable wound
 That pour'd forth spouting blood, he tore the shaft,
 And cast it from him with indignant heart.

It the swift Breezes caught, (for Fate forbade
 Th' immortal shaft to perish,) and restor'd
 To Phœbus, as he sought th' Olympian heights,
 Where the blest Gods in full assembly sat
 To view the slayers and the slain below :
 Some favour'd Greece, and others wish'd that Troy
 Might prove victorious. But when Juno saw
 Apollo enter the celestial dome,
 With bitter taunts she thus revil'd him ; “ Why,
 “ O Phœbus ! hast thou done this ruthless deed ?
 “ Thou hast forgot how we Immortals gave
 “ The silver-footed Thetis as a bride
 “ To Peleus, when emerging from the sea
 “ She join'd her husband. At the nuptial feast
 “ Thy song was heard ; the waving woods were
 “ hush'd,
 “ The rivers softly flow'd, and mountain beasts,
 “ And birds, all tamely crowded round to catch

“ The dulcet ringings of thy golden lyre.
 “ Then, too, while quaffing nectar ’mid the Gods,
 “ Thou pray’dst that Thetis to her lord might bear
 “ A son ; but now, unmindful of thy prayer,
 “ That noble offspring hast thou slain, to please
 “ The treacherous people of a crafty king,
 “ Laomedon, whose herds and flocks thou fed’st,
 “ And who with cruel bondage did oppress
 “ Thee, tho’ a God. Insensate ! to forget
 “ Thy many wrongs ; O pitiless ! to slay
 “ An hero worthy the esteem of heaven ;
 “ For he was ever pious, and he drew
 “ From us his lofty lineage. Yet to Troy
 “ The toils of war shall not be lighter, tho’
 “ Pelides be no more, for o’er the deep,
 “ To aid the Greeks, his blooming son shall come
 “ From Scyros, equalling his father’s might.
 “ ’Twas not regard for Troy that made thee slay

“ The chief, but thou wert envious of his fame,

“ For he was peerless mid the race of men.

“ O fool ! hereafter how canst thou sustain,

“ In Jove’s high halls, the gaze of Thetis’ eye,

“ Who once beheld thee with a mother’s love !”

She said reproaching, and the son of Jove

Nought answer’d, (for he reverenc’d much the wife

Of his almighty father,) but apart

From th’ everlasting Gods he sat, with eyes

Cast on the starry floor ; while some, who wish’d

The Greeks to prosper, murmur’d at his deed,

And some, who favour’d Troy, with joyous hearts

Extoll’d it, but in secret, for they fear’d

The wrath of Juno.

On the bloody plain

Pelides lay, still eager for the fight,

Tho’ life was welling from the fatal wound ;

Nor dar’d the Trojans near the prostrate chief

T' advance, but stood afar ; as in the woods
 The rustics stand to view a lion die
 Pierc'd by the hunter's shaft, whose flaming eyes
 In death glare fearfully. Upstarting now,
 With brandish'd spear amid the foes he rush'd :
 First Orythaon did he slay, the friend
 Of Hector ; on his temple lights the blow,
 Nor can his casque repel the iron point,
 But thro' the brain it goes. He next assail'd
 Hipponoos ; thro' the hollow of his eye
 He drove the spear, and on the ground the orb
 Roll'd gory, while his soul to Hades fled.
 Alcithoos then he slew ; the weapon pierc'd
 His jaw, and cut his tongue in twain, and down
 He fell, and from his ear the point came out.
 These did Pelides slay, and many more,
 For in his veins the blood was warm ; but when
 His stiff'ning limbs wax'd cold, upon his lance

He leant, and thus address'd the flying foe ;
 " Ye shall not, cowards ! from my spear escape
 " Tho' now I perish, but ye all shall feel
 " The vengeance of my fury." At his words
 The host of Troy ; and her auxiliar bands,
 Trembl'd, as stags amid the forest shake
 To hear a lion roaring ; for they thought
 Him yet unwounded. Now, o'erpower'd by death,
 E'en like a mountain fell the godlike chief
 To earth, and loudly rung his polish'd mail.
 As when some beast of prey, by shepherds slain,
 Lies grim beside the fold, the timid flock
 Fears to approach, and dreads it e'en in death ;
 So still the Trojans, tamers of the steed,
 Fear'd the huge corse of Peleus' son, tho' life
 Had fled for ever.

Paris joy'd to view

The hero's fall, for now he deem'd that Greece

No more would mingle in the bloody fray,
 Her bulwark thus o'erthrown, and to his band
 He call'd exciting ; “ Friends ! the hour is come,
 “ When ye must prove, if all your zeal to aid
 “ Me in the fight be counterfeit or true :
 “ Let us to-day beneath the Grecian spear
 “ Or press the plain, or drag to Troy the corse
 “ Of Peleus' son, at Hector's chariot-wheels,
 “ Whose steeds, lamenting for their master dear,
 “ Now bear me to the battle : so to them
 “ Will be great glory, and my brother's shade
 “ In Hades will rejoice, if to the dead
 “ Be sense of joy. As lionesses throng,
 “ Or female pards, round him who hath destroy'd
 “ Their much-lov'd young, so round Achilles' corse,
 “ When dragg'd by us to Troy, exultingly
 “ Will rush our Trojan women, for by him
 “ Their husbands, brothers, sons, or sires have bled.

“ But most my father, and our elders hoar,
 “ Whom age detains within the walls, will joy
 “ To view his body, which the birds of heaven
 “ Shall tear unburied.” Thus he said, and straight

The dead Æacides, a valiant band,
 Glaucus, Æneas, and Agenor bold,
 And many more who fear’d him when alive,
 Eager to drag the stiffen’d form to Troy,
 Surrounded. Not neglectful of his friend
 Was godlike Ajax ; he to guard the corse
 Impetuous ran, and with protended spear
 Drove back the warriors, who, tho’ still repell’d,
 Renew’d on every side their fierce assault.

As when the yellow bees with quiv’ring wings,
 Innumerable, hover round the hive,
 Eager to chase the clown away, who comes
 To steal their store pellucid, and who scorns
 Their vain attack ; so still the chiefs of Troy

On Ajax rush'd, who all their might despis'd.

* * * * *

Still the cold body of his much-lov'd friend
 Did Ajax guard, o'erthrowing many a chief:
 And near him, shedding dire dismay around,
 Ulysses fought; Pisandros first he slew,
 The nimble son of Mænalus, who dwelt
 In fam'd Abydos. Next his weapon pierc'd
 Atymnius, whom the nymph with golden locks,
 Bright Pegasis, to brave Emalion bore,
 Where deep Granicus rolls his lucid stream.
 Oresbius then he struck to earth, whose home
 Was high 'mid Ida's green retreats, nor him
 Did Panacea welcome from the war,
 His tender mother of illustrious name.
 Beneath his might each warrior sunk, who dar'd
 T' approach the body, till on the right knee
 Him with long lance did Alcon wound, and forth

The red blood gush'd, and trickling down distain'd
 The shining greave. Regardless of the blow
 Ulysses straight the daring youth assail'd
 With quiv'ring spear ; nor could his shield repel
 The point that pierc'd his breast, and to the ground
 Dash'd him, while purple streams deform'd his mail.
 From the stiff limbs, and perforated shield,
 The victor drew the deadly spear, and life
 From Alcon fled. Still reckless of his wound
 Ulysses fought, nor ceas'd the other chiefs
 Of Greece to 'war around Achilles' corse
 Assiduous, while the Trojans strew'd the plain,
 Thick as autumnal leaves, that hide the ground
 When ruffian tempests shake the rustling grove.

'Gainst Ajax now his bow did Paris bend,
 But ere the shaft had flown, the wary Greek
 Hurl'd a huge stone, that on the Trojan's helm

Lighted, and crush'd his many-colour'd crest.
 Prone in the dust he fell ; his hand unnerv'd
 Let drop the bow, and all his useless shafts
 Were scatter'd. To his car their fainting prince
 His friends uplift, and while a lowly moan
 He utters frequent, Hector's generous steeds
 Convey him quickly to his native walls.
 Nor did his careful train upon the ground
 His scatter'd weapons leave ; with eager haste
 They snatch'd them up, and to their chief restor'd.
 Him as he fled, with clamour loud, bespoke
 Ajax, " O dog ! thou hast escap'd to-day,
 " But death shall soon o'ertake thee, slain by me,
 " Or by some other Greek : 'tis now my care
 " To guard Pelides' body from the foe."
 He said, and on the troops of 'Troy again
 Turn'd furious, who no more his might resist,
 But from him fly, as vultures on the hills,

Which from the carcase of a wolf-slain sheep
 The lordly eagle, king of birds, hath scar'd.
 Now at the foe huge stones he cast, and now
 He ply'd his falchion keen, and brandish'd lance.

- Straight to their walls the sons of Ilion rush'd,
 While Ajax follow'd on their rear ; his hands
 Were dy'd in gore, and sure he would have heap'd
 The crimson'd plain with piles of reeking dead,
 Had not their city with wide-open'd gates
 Receiv'd them panting. Thus the Trojan bands
 E'en to their walls he chas'd, as to the fold
 The shepherd drives his flock ; and now his steps
 Retracing, lightly o'er the plain he mov'd,
 Treading on blood, and mail, and warriors slain,
 For all the ground was strew'd with mangl'd dead
 From Ilion's gates to Helle's sounding sea.

But not from these defil'd with bloody dust

Did the brave Grecians strip their arms, for they
 Were now intent to pay the last sad rites
 To great Pelides, once their boast in war.
 The chiefs of Greece his body from the field
 Of battle brought, with pious care, and laid
 In his own tent, beside the well-beak'd ships.
 Round his cold limbs the people throng'd, and loud
 Their voices rose lamenting, to behold
 Him once their bulwark, by the sounding sea
 Lying, oblivious of the warlike toil.
 He seem'd in mien like Tityus, when he lay
 Immensely stretcht upon his parent Earth,
 Pierc'd by Apollo's winged shafts, because
 The monster dar'd with hands impure assail
 The bright Latona. Grief o'erpower'd their hearts,
 For now they deem'd that they by Ilion's sons
 Must fall in battle. Recollections sweet
 Of their lov'd parents, of their youthful brides,

Who pin'd all lonely in a widow'd bed,
 And of their blooming children, much increas'd
 Their woe. Beside Achilles' honour'd corse,
 Upon their faces, on the shore, they lay,
 Dissolv'd in sorrow ; frantically they tore
 Their clust'ring hair, and o'er their heads they heap'd
 The yellow sand, with many a bitter groan.
 As when the enemy in some fair town
 Hath pent its citizens, and gives to fire
 The regal domes, despoil'd of all their wealth,
 Dire lamentations rise ; such cries were heard
 Along the verge of Helle's sounding sea,
 Mourning Æacides ; who press'd the ground
 Majestic as the mailed Mars, when him
 The warrior-goddess fell'd with pond'rous stone.
 Incessant groans the Myrmidons pour'd forth,
 Stretcht in the dust beside their slaughter'd lord,
 Who ever was most gentle, and to all

A ready comrade, free from pride ; for he
Was wise as valiant.

Ajax most deplor'd

The great Achilles, whom the ties of blood
Bound to his heart ; now to the tent he rush'd
Where lay the pallid corse ; now on the shore
He cast himself ; and then with tears exclaim'd ;
“ O son of Peleus, bulwark of our host !
“ Far from thy native Phthia hast thou died
“ At hated Ilion, by a random shaft
“ Slain, which some coward in the fray discharg'd :
“ For sure the chief, whose arm is skill'd to wield
“ The massive buckler, who around his brow
“ Knows how to fit the casque with nodding crest,
“ And who with potent hand can grasp the lance,
“ And drive it forceful thro' the brazen mail
“ Of an opposing foe, disdains to shoot
“ Uncertain arrows from a distant post.

“ Had he, who laid thee low, in equal fight
 “ Advanc’d to meet thee, then beneath thy spear
 “ He must have perish’d. But almighty Jove
 “ Seems hostile now to Greece, and haply soon
 “ Will give to Ilion victory, since thee,
 “ Our matchless bulwark, he hath snatcht away.
 “ Alas! with groans thy hoary sire will fill
 “ His mansion, when thy early death is told;
 “ The very tale, perchance, will crush his heart,
 “ And send him to the grave; and better ’tis
 “ That this should be, than that th’ old man should sit
 “ Cheerless beside his solitary hearth,
 “ Bent down by age, and by consuming woe—
 “ Peleus, whom once the friendship of the Gods
 “ So highly honour’d!” Thus he spoke, and next
 The aged Phœnix, clasping the cold form
 Of his Achilles, pour’d the loud lament;
 “ Untimely hast thou perish’d, O my child!

- “ And ceaseless grief is mine. Ere this sad day
 “ O ! would the earth had o’er my tomb been heapt,
 “ For ne’er on me did greater sorrow fall ;
 “ Not e’en when I my country left, and fled
 “ To Peleus’ court, whose hospitable halls
 “ Receiv’d me. Many gifts he gave, and o’er
 “ Dolopia bade me rule : thee in his arms
 “ He brought an infant, on my bosom laid
 “ The precious charge, and anxiously enjoin’d,
 “ That I should rear thee as my own with all
 “ A parent’s love. I fail’d not in my trust ;
 “ And oft, while round my neck thy hands were
 lock’d,
 “ From thy sweet lips the half-articulate sound
 “ Of *father* came ; and oft, as children use,
 “ Mewling and puking did’st thou drench my tunic.
 “ Upon thy growing infancing I gaz’d
 “ Exulting, for I hop’d in thee to find

“ The guard of my declining years ; and long
 “ Thou prospered'st to my wishes—but, alas !
 “ Now Stygian darkness holds thee, and to me
 “ Is bitter anguish, which I hope will end
 “ My life, ere Peleus hears thy timeless fate ;
 “ For with exceeding sorrow he will mourn :
 “ Haply consuming grief will send us both
 “ To the cold grave : and better there to lie,
 “ Than live without the darling of our age.”
 He said, and then with tears Atrides thus ;
 “ Thou art no more, O bravest of our host !
 “ Thou art no more, and thou hast left the sons
 “ Of Greece defenceless. Now the Trojan bands,
 “ Who fled from thee, as sheep the lion shun,
 “ E'en to our ships will boldly rush, and dare
 “ The battle. Dost thou too, O mighty Jove !
 “ With lying words deceive unhappy men ?
 “ For thou did'st once assure me that my arms

“ Should lay king Priam's lofty turrets low.
 “ But all my hopes are frustrate, and I think
 “ That I shall never find an end of war
 “ Since Peleus' son hath perish'd.” Thus he spoke,
 And all the people rais'd the loud lament,
 While the ships echoed to their groans. As when,
 Disturb'd by furious winds, the swelling deep
 Rolls its long whitening waves, and dashes them
 With deafning uproar on the dripping rocks
 That line the strand ; such clamour rose to heaven
 While all the people for Achilles mourn'd
 With lamentations ; and the spangled night
 Would sure have found them still indulging grief,
 Had not old Nestor thus bespoke the son
 Of Atreus ; “ Sceptred leader of the Greeks !
 “ Let us forthwith from lamentation cease,
 “ Else shalt thou strive in vain for many days
 “ To stay thy people's sorrow. Let us wash

“ The clotted blood from great Achilles’ corse,
 “ And lay it on the bier, for ’tis not right
 “ To be neglectful of the mighty dead.”

He said, and straight the monarch bids his train
 Place cauldrons on the fire with water fill’d,
 And wash the corse, and wrap it with due care
 In vestures beautiful of ocean’s die,
 Which to her child, ere he for Ilion sail’d,
 Immortal Thetis gave. Their king’s behest
 Th’ attendants execute, and in the tent
 Cleanse and adorn the body.

Pity now

For slain Æacides Minerva feels,
 And from corruption to preserve the corse
 She drops ambrosial unguents on his head,
 A dewy freshness and the glow of life
 Diffusing. On his arched brows she sets
 A look severe, such as his features wore

When his Patroclus fell by Hector's lance :
 His form an awful majesty invests,
 And like one buried in a sleep profound
 The couch he presses.

On the corse the Greeks
 Astonish'd gaze. Around it women throng,
 Whom great Achilles once in war had ta'en
 Captive, when Lemnos he laid waste, and Thebes,
 Eetion's city, with the lofty gates.
 Their snowy breasts they beat with frantic hand
 Wounding their beauty, while they shrilly mourn'd
 Their perish'd lord, who ne'er to menial toil
 Compell'd them, tho' the offspring of his foes.
 But most of all did sad Briseis grieve,
 The beauteous paramour of Pelcus' son ;
 Shrieking she mov'd around his corse, and tore
 Her tender flesh ; and bloody tumours rose
 Upon her bosom ; yet could naught obscure

Her loveliness: at length she thus exclaim'd:

“ Ah me! most miserable of woman kind!

“ Nor for my kindred, nor the loss of home,

“ Griev'd I so much as now for thee; thou wert

“ The light of day to me! my very life!

“ My hope of good! the solace of my woes!

“ And far more dear than beauty, or the love

“ Of parents! Thou wert all to me, whom thou

“ From a slave's low estate did'st raise, and take

“ To share thy bed. But now some other Greek

“ Will bear me off to Sparta's fertile fields,

“ Or sandy Argos; and I there shall toil

“ Once more in bondage. Would the heap'd-up

“ earth

“ Had held me cold, ere I had seen thee dead!”

She said lamenting, and her eyes pour'd forth

Fast flowing tears, as from the riven rock

A fountain sends its ever-trilling stream

By ice and snow supplied, which Phœbus melts
With arrowy rays.

Now in the hoary deep
Old Nereus' daughters heard the loud lament ;
Within their breasts exceeding grief arose,
And Helle's tide resounded to their cries.
In azure garments, from the parted wave,
Emerging, thro' the liquid air they sail'd
Tumultuous, as a flock of long-bill'd cranes
That fly the coming storm. Beside the ships
Of Greece they lighted, and with groans deplor'd
The mighty offspring of their sister dear.
The Muses too were there ; for they had left
The heights of Helicon, and sorrowing came
To pleasure bright-ey'd Thetis, and enhance
The funeral honours of her warlike son.
Jove made the Grecian bands devoid of fear
That they might face the Deities who stood

Lamenting ; loudly did the people mourn,
 And tears were glittering on their polish'd mail.
 Then Thetis, clasping her beloved child,
 And on his lips imprinting many a kiss,
 Exclaim'd, “ Let now the Goddess of the dawn,
 “ In rosy vest array'd, rejoice ! Let now
 “ The limpid Axius joy, and rage no more
 “ For his Asteropæus ! Let the race
 “ Of Priam now be glad !—but I will mount
 “ To blue Olympus, and before the feet
 “ Of Jove will lie, and pour forth bitter groans,
 “ For that he gave me to a mortal's arms,
 “ Whom age hath seiz'd, and silent death awaits.
 “ His bed I loath'd, and oft from his embrace
 “ I slid away, into a stream dissolv'd,
 “ Then would I dart a winged bird to heaven,
 “ And next I blaz'd a fire with bickering flames,
 “ Nor could he win me to his love, till Jove

“ With awful nod assur’d me that my son
 “ Should peerless be in form and martial might ;
 “ Peerless he was, indeed, but ah ! short liv’d,
 “ And hence my sorrow. To th’ Olympian halls
 “ I now will hasten, to lament my child,
 “ And to upbraid the cruel king of heaven,
 “ Reminding him how I his fetters loos’d
 “ When hostile Gods assail’d him.” Thetis said,
 And her the wise Calliope bespoke ;
 “ Daughter of Nereus ! cease thy wail, and stay
 “ Thy murmurs ’gainst the ruler of the skies ;
 “ For e’en the demigods, the sons of Jove,
 “ To death are subject all : nor could I save
 “ My child, enchanting Orpheus, whom the rocks,
 “ The waving forests, and blue-gushing streams,
 “ Pursu’d, enamour’d of his thrilling shell.
 “ He died, alas ! but I restrain’d my grief
 “ Since ’tis unseemly in the powers divine,

“ To cherish fruitless woe. Thy darling son
 “ Forbear to mourn, for him shall mighty bards,
 “ Inspir’d by me, and by my sisters, give
 “ To deathless glory. Like a mortal then
 “ With groans lament not: sure thou know’st that Fate,
 “ To Gods superior, o’er the race of men
 “ Holds absolute dominion ; when she bids
 “ The towers of Troy must fall, and many a youth,
 “ Grecian, and Trojan, on the plain must lie.”
 Thus spoke the Muse : now sunk the flaming Sun
 In ocean’s bed, and Night with darkness fill’d
 Th’ expanse of air. Upon the sand the Greeks
 Slept round the corse ; but slumber from the eyes
 Of Thetis fled : beside her son she stood
 With the immortal Nereids, while the Nine
 Alternate strove to soothe her bitter woe.

When o’er the purple hills Aurora spreads

Her beamy radiance, straight the Grecians place
Pelides' corse upon the pyre, which they
Of heap'd-up wood had rais'd, on Ida's hill
With labour fell'd. Bright arms of slaughter'd foes
On it they cast, and o'er it captive youths
Of Trojan race and beauteous form they slew.
Sheep too and swine were slain to feed the flames,
And handmaids brought with lamentations loud
Robes of embroidery rare, to swell the pile,
And gold, and amber. Their long clust'ring locks
The Myrmidons above the body strew'd,
Nor did Briseis spare her tresses bright,
But gave them, a last present, to her lord.
Rich unguents next upon the pyre were thrown,
And lucid honey, and odorous wine,
And exquisite perfumes of wond'rous worth
Gather'd from earth and ocean. Round it then
The troops, all furnish'd with their shining arms,

In order mov'd, on foot and on their steeds.
 Now awful Jove celestial dew's distill'd
 Upon the corse, and Hermes to the realms
 Of Æolus despatch'd, to call the Winds
 To fan the fire of great Pelides' pile.
 Quick at the bidding of their king rush forth
 Boreas and Zephyrus ; scouring land and sea
 They speed with fury, and before them drive
 The eddy'ing rack. Upon the pyre they fall
 With mingled violence, and black'ning smoke
 And curling flames ascend the sky, while still
 The Myrmidons lament. The livelong day,
 And all the night the Winds incessant blew,
 Ere the huge mass o'erpower'd by Vulcan's strength
 Had sunk to ashes ; the embattled clouds
 They then dispell'd, and to their caves repair'd.
 The Myrmidons to quench the embers pour'd
 Rich wine, and carefully their Hero's bones

(Which were of mould gigantic, and unlike
 To those of Ilion's youths that near him lay)
 They gather'd groaning ; and the Nereids fair
 Wrapt them in fat, and in an ample urn,
 Mid honey and ambrosial ointments, stor'd :
 The silver urn with golden forms emboss'd
 By Vulcan's art did Thetis give, and she
 From Bacchus had receiv'd it.

On a cliff

That frowns o'er Helle's wave, the Grecians rais'd
 The tomb and monument of Peleus' son
 With bitter grief ; nor were his deathless steeds
 Devoid of sorrow ; plenteous tears they shed,
 And loathing amid wretched men to dwell,
 Long'd o'er the ocean-streams to seek the fields
 In which to Zephyr of the sounding wings
 Podarge bore them. But the will of heaven
 On Phrygia's strand detain'd them, till the son

Of great Achilles should from Scyros come :
 For at their birth the Fates severe decreed
 That they, tho' of immortal seed, should first
 Be curb'd by Neptune ; by bold Peleus next,
 Then by Pelides greater than his sire,
 And last by Neoptolemus, whom they
 Were doom'd hereafter to th' Elysian plains
 To bear in glory. Conscious of the will
 Of heaven their lost Achilles they lament,
 Yet long their coming master to behold.

Now from the bosom of the swelling deep
 Neptune emerg'd, and standing on the shore,
 Invisible to mortals, thus address'd
 The weeping Thetis, “ Dry thy useless tears,
 “ For not in Hades shall thy child abide,
 “ But borne aloft to Jove's resplendent halls,
 “ He at the heavenly banquets shall recline,

“ Like Bacchus and Alcmena’s mighty son.

“ There is an island in the Euxine sea

“ Where, by my power, Achilles shall be deem’d

“ A God ; and him with sacrificial rites

“ The neighbouring nations shall adore. Then cease

“ Thy piteous wail, and unavailing tears.”

He said, and vanish’d in the hoary deep,

And beauteous Thetis from his words receiv’d

A little consolation. To their ships

The Greeks retire, to Helicon again

The Muses speed, and all the Nereids plunge

Into the billows mourning Peleus’ son.

THE
SHIELD AND HELMET
OF
ACHILLES.

From Book V.

THE
SHIELD AND HELMET
OF
ACHILLES.

MID the assembly, when the games were done,
The Goddess-mother plac'd the wond'rous arms
Of great Pelides, fram'd by art divine.
In the wide circle of the shield were seen
Refulgent images of varied forms,
The work of Vulcan ; who had there describ'd
The Heaven, the Ether, and the Earth and Sea,
The Winds, the Clouds, the Moon, the Sun, apart
In different stations ; and you there might view
The stars that gem the still-revolving heaven,
And, under them, the vast expanse of air,

In which, with outstretch'd wings, the long-beak'd
birds

Winnow'd the gale, as if instinct with life.
Around the shield the waves of ocean flow'd,
The realms of Tethys, which unnumber'd streams,
In azure mazes rolling o'er the earth,
Seem'd to augment. On the green hills appear'd
Bears, lions, panthers, and spine-bristling boars,
Whetting their bright tusks 'gainst the hunter's train,
That closely chas'd them, arm'd with darts and stones,
And urging on the panting dogs. And here
Were horrid wars depicted ; grimly pale
Were heroes lying with their slaughter'd steeds
Upon the ground incarnadin'd with blood.
Stern stalk'd Bellona, smear'd with reeking gore,
Thro' charging ranks ; beside her Rout was seen,
And Terror, Discord to the fatal strife
Inciting men, and Furies breathing flames :

Nor absent were the Fates, and the tall shape
 Of ghastly Death, round whom did Battles throng,
 Their limbs distilling plenteous blood and sweat,
 And Gorgons, whose long locks were twisting snakes,
 That shot their forky tongues incessant forth.
 Such were the horrors of dire war ; and all
 Were with such cunning art portray'd, they struck
 The gazer with affright. But here were seen
 The joys of Peace ; in beauteous towns appear'd
 The busy citizens, on various works
 Intent, while Justice rul'd them ; and the ground
 Gave plentiful the grain, and vineyards glow'd
 With clust'ring grapes empurpled. Here arose
 A mountain high and craggy ; on its top
 A palm-tree grew, upon whose loftiest branch
 Was Virtue standing, while her tow'ring form
 Reach'd the blue heaven : paths leading up the hill
 Were many, but projecting rocks oft barr'd

Th' ascent ; of all the mortals who essay'd
 To climb, a few persisted ; most were seen
 Returning, wearied with the toilsome way.
 Here was a corn field ; reapers in a row,
 Each with a sharp-tooth'd sickle in his hand
 Work'd busily, and as the harvest fell,
 Others were ready still to bind the sheaves :
 Yok'd to a wain that bore the corn away
 Here steers were moving ; sturdy bullocks here
 The plough were drawing, and the furrow'd glebe
 Was black behind them, while with goading wand
 The active youths impell'd them. Here a feast
 Was grav'd : to the shrill pipe and ringing lyre
 A band of blooming virgins led the dance,
 As if endu'd with life ; while, to behold
 Their varied measures, and the festive mirth,
 Venus emerging from the deep stood nigh,
 Her tresses wet with ocean's silvery foam ;

With her the Graces came, and round her still
On rosy wings did Cupid hover. Here
The daughters of the ancient Nereus led
Thetis, their sister, to the nuptial bowers
Of Peleus, on Thessalia's pine-capt hill,
Where all th' Immortals held the solemn feast
Rejoicing : and around were verdant meads
Irriguous, flush'd with flowers, and nodding groves,
And fountains most translucent. Here the sea
Was pictur'd stormy : on the tumbling waves
Vessels were riding, some obliquely driven,
And some straightonwards ; dreading the wild storm,
Their snowy sails the mariners with speed
Were low'ring ; others on the benches sat
Plying their oars, from whose repeated strokes
The dark-blue waves around were crested white.
Here in his chariot, by sea-horses drawn,
Whose speed was quicken'd by a golden lash,

Appear'd earth-shaking Neptune ; where he mov'd,
 Down fell th' enridged billows, and the brine
 Grew level ; sporting round their awful king
 Unwieldy monsters of the deep were seen
 In multitudes ; and tho' of silver fram'd
 Thou would'st have deem'd them living. Other
 shapes,

Innumerable, upon the wond'rous work
 By Vulcan's art were pictur'd ; round the whole
 Flow'd the full swell of ocean, and confin'd
 'Th' all-variegated shield.

Beside it lay,
 Weighty and huge, the helm of Peleus' son :
 On it was fashion'd, horrid all in gold,
 The form of Jove ; he seem'd to tread the sky
 In anger, and th' auxiliar gods around
 In stern array against the Titans stood ;
 From heaven unceasingly the lightnings flew

Reiterated, for his all of might
Did Jove put forth, and the gigantic brood,
Panting, were shrouded in a blaze of fire.

NOTES.

NOTES.

Page 4. line 15. *Penthesilea*.] In the Iliad no mention is made of Amazons assisting the Trojans: they were introduced at the siege of Troy by the Cyclic Poets, and first (as is supposed by Heyne, Excurs. xix. ad Æneid. 1.) by Arctinus the Milesian.

Tryphiodorus takes notice of the death of Penthesilea, (32—38.) and Virgil makes her one of the principal figures in the picture on the wall of the temple at Carthage, describing her in four verses of transcendant beauty. (Æn. i. 490—3.) Tzetzes, too, “*stolidæ jactantiæ homo*,” as Heyne calls him, gives a long account of Penthesilea, in his *Posthomerica*, somewhat different from that of Quintus.

P. 9. l. 13. Homer tells us (Iliad 24.) that Achilles dragged the body of Hector round the tomb of Patroclus, but says nothing of its being drawn round the walls of Troy: the latter circumstance

was without doubt an invention of those poets who continued "the tale of Troy" after Homer, and whom Virgil has followed, (*Æneid* i. v. 483.) when he says, in describing the picture in the Carthaginian temple,

Thrice round the Trojan walls Achilles drew
The corse of Hector, whom in fight he slew.

DRYDEN.

P. 10. l. 6. —*a fraudulent dream.*] Tzetzes says, "that, during the night before the death of Penthesilea, Juno sent two mournful dreams, one to Priam, and one to the Amazon. Priam dreamed that Hector had returned to life, that he was as valiant as ever, but wore the figure of a maid, and that Achilles slew him. Penthesilea thought that her mother was giving her as a bride to a fair-haired, beautiful youth, whom when she was about to follow, a man black as pitch, of savage appearance and gigantic stature, with an hundred heads, bearing a brazen lance, and mounted on a fiercely-snorting steed, suddenly seized, and threw her into a dismal dungeon." *Posthomericæ*, 119—134.

P. 15. l. 18. Protesilaus, son of Iphiclus, king of

Phylace in Thessaly, was the first of the Greeks who set his foot on the Trojan shore, and was immediately slain. See Iliad. ii. 698.

P. 34. l. 1. —*next, her beamy helm, &c.*] Our Spenser has imitated this passage in his Faery Queene, b. v. c. 5.

XI.

Having her thus disarmed of her shield,
Upon her helmet he againe her strooke,
That downe she fell upon the grassie field
In senselesse swoune, as if her life forsooke,
And pangs of death her spirit overtooke :
Whom when he saw before his foote prostrated
He to her lept with deadly dreadful looke,
And her sun-shyrie helmet soone unlaced
Thinking at once both head and helmet to have rac'd.

XII.

But wheneas he discovered had her face,
He saw, his senses straunge astonishment,
A miracle of nature's goodly grace
In her faire visage void of ornament,
But bathed in blood and sweat together ment,
Which in the rudenesse of that evill plight
Bewrayd the signs of feature excellent :
Like as the moone in foggie winter's night
Doth sceme to be herselfe, though darkned be her light.

XIII.

At sight thereof his cruell minded hart
Empierced was with pittifull regard, &c.

P. 34. l. 16. *The valiant maid.*] According to Tzetzes, Penthesilea was quite a girl ;

οὐδε τι μαστον εἴβαινε, κορη γὰρ ἦν ἐπὶ ἀδμης.

Posthom. 198.

Propertius says, that after her death, her beauty conquered the conqueror ;

Aurea cui postquam nudavit cassida frontem,
Vicit victorem candida forma virum.

Lib. iii. cl. 10.

P. 41. l. 1. Arctinus wrote a poem on the story of Memnon, called *Æthiopis*, from which Quintus no doubt borrowed much in his second book.

P. 49. l. 8. Homer tells us (*Odyssey* iv. 188.) that Antilochus was slain by Memnon.

P. 50. l. 3. Periclymenus was one of the twelve sons of Neleus, and brother of Nestor ; he was slain by Hercules.

P. 58. l. 1. *the Thracian king.*] Lycurgus king

of Thrace,' drove Bacchus and his worshippers from his kingdom.

P. 58. l. 4. We are told by Homer (Iliad i. 399.) that Juno, Neptune, and Minerva, *wished to bind Jupiter in chains, and that Thetis prevented them.*

P. 61. l. 13. *The Winds, her offspring—]*

The Morning to Astræus bare the Winds
Of spirit untam'd; East, West, and South, and North
Cleaving his rapid course; a Goddess thus
Embracing with a God.

Hesiod. Theog. 378. Elton's trans.

P. 65. l. 17. —*and still retain*

The name of their lov'd leader.]

They were called Memnones.

P. 72. l. 15. The poets give different accounts of the death of Achilles. Sophocles agrees with Quintus; Neoptolemus, being asked by Philoctetes concerning his father, replies,

He is no more, tho' not by mortal arm
Subdu'd, but by the arrow of a God.

Soph. Phil. 334.

The following remarks are from Merrick's notes on Tryphiodorus:

The death of Achilles is told by the author, who goes under the name of Dictys Cretensis, and pretends to have been present at the siege of Troy, in the following manner. Achilles being informed that Hecuba and the rest of the Trojan matrons were preparing a sacrifice to Apollo, went secretly with a few attendants to observe the ceremony. He there fell in love with Polyxena the daughter of Priam, and sent an ambassador to Troy with proposals of marriage, to which Priam at last consented. But just at the celebration of their nuptials, Deiphobus, the brother of Polyxena, ran to embrace Achilles, while Paris came behind him, and killed him. Dictys. l. 4.

Ovid and others affirm that he was slain by Paris before the walls of Troy, and that Apollo directed the dart. This account agrees with a prophecy made to him in the twenty-second book of the Iliad; where Hector, dying by his hand, breaks out into these expressions;

But oh, be cautious now, lest Heaven, perchance,
Requite thee on that day, when pierc'd thyself

By Paris and Apollo, thou shalt fall,
 Brave as thou art, within the Scæan gate.

COWPER.

P. 73. l. 12. The marriage of Peleus and Thetis is a theme on which the mind of Quintus seems to have dwelt with great pleasure, as particular mention of it occurs several times in his poem. Coluthus, in his "Rape of Helen," enumerates very elegantly the immortal personages who were present on that occasion ;

When Peleus wedded an immortal bride,
 Where towers Thessalia's mount in rocky pride,
 To grace the nuptials of the Nereid, there
 With joyous speed the Powers divine repair.
 The Thunderer came from blue Olympus steep,
 And Neptune left the roarings of the deep ;
 The sister Nine, and Phœbus there were seen
 Amid the throng, and heaven's majestic Queen,
 And laughing Venus of voluptuous mien.
 Persuasion sought the Centaur's bowery grove,
 While beauteous garlands for the bride she wove,
 And bore the quiver of the archer Love.
 Pallas was there, but laid her helmet by
 With nodding crest discolour'd diversely.
 To join the train bright Dian left the chace,
 And mailed Mars, the nuptial feast to grace,

Without his blood-stain'd spear or buckler came,
 And smil'd, as when he courted Vulcan's wanton dame.
 Bacchus conspicuous mov'd, while on the air
 Floated the tangles of his golden hair,
 That Zephyr lifted from his shoulders fair.

P. 88. l. 11. — *I failed not in my trust,
 And oft, &c.]*

The description here of the infancy of Achilles is partly taken from a passage in Iliad IX. in translating which, Pope, with that squeamish artificial taste, which distinguishes the age of Anne, omits this natural (and, let me add, affecting) circumstance :

— and the wine

Held to thy lips ; and many a time in fits
 Of infant frowardness, the purple juice
 Rejecting, thou hast delug'd all my vest,
 And fill'd my bosom.

COWPER.

P. 95. l. 8. Asteropæus was a prince of Pæonia, slain by Achilles, to whom he says,

My proud descent
 I draw from Axius, Axius fairest stream
 That waters earth, and Pelegon his son
 If rumour err not, is my glorious sire.

Iliad. XXI. (*Cowper.*)

P. 100. l. 8. *On a cliff*] The promontory of Sigeum.

P. 102. l. 2. The island Achillea, in the Euxine, at the mouth of the Ister.

P. 103. l. 1. Quintus was bold in attempting to rival Homer's description of the shield of Achilles, which the reader will find in Cowper's eighteenth Iliad.

FINIS.

11

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